

# **Social inclusion in New Zealand Rapid Evidence Review**

**May 2020**



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**  
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

This rapid evidence review was produced by the Ministry of Social Development following the 15 March 2019 terror attacks in Christchurch to support Government assessment of its role in supporting social inclusion.

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## **Acknowledgements**

The author is grateful to members of various government agencies for providing relevant literature and related reports and material, including the Ministries of Health, Education, Justice, Culture and Heritage, the Department of Internal Affairs, Treasury and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC), and support from staff within MSD.

This review has been improved by the feedback and suggestions from a range of reviewers, including a cross-agency Reference Group and a selection of external reviewers, including academics and community contacts.

Thanks too are offered for the support provided by MSD's InfoHelp team and the Ministry of Health's Library.

## **Disclaimer**

The views and interpretations in this report are those of the author and are not the official position of the Ministry of Social Development.

## **Published (online)**

August 2020

## **ISBN**

978-0-9951240-9-7

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# Executive summary

This rapid evidence review summarises New Zealand and international evidence about the process of building social inclusion. The review aims to contribute to the evidence base needed to help make New Zealand more socially inclusive, and asks five main questions:

- What is social inclusion?
- Why is it important?
- What do we know about the extent of diversity and social inclusion in New Zealand?
- How can we build a more socially inclusive New Zealand?
- What do we need to understand better?

It is important to define social inclusion to help clarify the problem we are trying to solve. Although there are a range of definitions, for the purposes of this review we follow the World Bank in defining social inclusion as *the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society — improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity*. In the New Zealand context, we take this to mean that social inclusion refers to the degree to which:

- communities across New Zealand embrace diversity and ensure all people feel recognised and accepted
- people are free from prejudice and discrimination
- people have the resources, skills and knowledge to meaningfully participate.

The New Zealand context is unique in a number of ways that are important when interpreting and applying the evidence about social inclusion, especially from overseas. In particular, the nation's bicultural foundations, the historical and ongoing injustices towards Tangata Whenua, and the evolving Māori-Crown partnership, are the fundamental starting point for understanding social inclusion in New Zealand.

Another distinctive feature of the New Zealand context is the astonishing pace and scale of recent social change — this is projected to continue apace for at least the next twenty years. Not only is New Zealand one of the most culturally diverse nations in the world, but there is an increasing awareness that social diversity in all its forms is becoming more complex, cross-cutting and interconnected. As these changes are occurring, many groups are being left behind, as evidenced by consistent and systematic disparities in health, education, justice and other wellbeing outcomes; in people’s experience of prejudice and discrimination; and in wider societal attitudes towards different social groups.

Mindful of this context, the present review identifies evidence for six key ways to help make New Zealand more socially inclusive:

1. **Fostering common values and inclusive social norms.** Leaders at all levels can support an important and ongoing national conversation about New Zealand’s values and norms, including the value of protecting and celebrating diversity and upholding shared, civic norms. The principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Te Tiriti) can also support this process by providing a distinctive, whole-of-Aotearoa New Zealand approach; one that values and upholds the nation’s bicultural foundations while embracing New Zealand’s increasingly diverse future as a strength.
2. **Encouraging and facilitating positive interactions between people.** There is compelling evidence that creating opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to positively interact with each other helps to promote more positive inter-group attitudes. The policy implications of this are wide-ranging, including the need to ensure schools, communities, workplaces, institutions and media representations better reflect New Zealand’s diversity, as well as facilitating and normalising positive interactions between diverse groups.
3. **Tackling harms to inclusion, including prejudice, discrimination and other harmful behaviours.** There is clear evidence that many New Zealanders routinely experience prejudice and discrimination, which negatively affects people’s wellbeing and prevents people from participating in society. This discrimination takes a variety of forms and includes not just interpersonal but also structural discrimination and prejudice. Comprehensive, evidence-based strategies and ongoing monitoring are needed to prevent and limit these impacts, especially in schools and workplaces where most prejudice and discrimination occurs.

4. **Supporting people to have the knowledge and skills they need to participate.** Ensuring equitable access to education and training, that adapts to meet people's diverse needs, is a critical long-term driver of social inclusion. An inclusive education system should give all New Zealanders the social and emotional skills needed to understand and appreciate diverse perspectives, as well as empowering people from diverse backgrounds to be able to participate socially and economically.
5. **Supporting people to have a voice and feel heard.** There is very good evidence that giving people a voice, ensuring people feel heard, and treating people fairly contributes to people's trust, civic participation, and willingness to make compromises for the common good. Providing equitable access to these opportunities to have a voice and feel heard would help start to address the marked disparities in institutional trust felt by marginalised groups.
6. **Reducing inequality and improving opportunities for people by providing support and resources.** Inequality in people's access to resources and opportunities are a fundamental brake on progress towards greater social inclusion. Redressing these inequities, especially through access to employment opportunities and ongoing reforms to the tax-transfer system, are essential for building social inclusion over the long term.

One of the challenges of building social inclusion is that it is an inherently complex process. Progress will require ongoing action across all six key areas, as well as buy-in from a range of actors at multiple levels – from grassroots campaigns and community-led programmes right through to changes to wider policy settings and legislative safeguards.

These challenges, while significant, are arguably modest compared to the risks of assuming that social inclusion will take care of itself in the face of unprecedented social change. The evidence reviewed here instead highlights some opportunities to develop a forward-looking, evidence-informed and distinctive approach to building a more socially inclusive New Zealand.

# Background

This rapid evidence review was produced by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) following the 15 March 2019 terror attacks in Christchurch to support Government assessment of its role in supporting social inclusion. This review was undertaken quickly and was not designed as a systematic review of the evidence.

In April 2019 MSD was commissioned to rapidly collate the evidence base about how to improve social inclusion (including measures taken post terrorist events, building cohesive communities, migrant and refugee settlement, and working with disaffected and isolate people), by the end of May 2019.

## Methods

A cross-agency working group and a broader reference group were used to support this review on social inclusion. Members of these groups provided existing and previous work that their agency held relevant to social inclusion. Non-systematic literature searches were undertaken by MSD's and the Ministry of Health's information and library services to source recent relevant literature and evidence for what works. Contact was also made with a small number of academics with expertise to seek their advice and input.

The World Bank's definition of social inclusion was adopted for the purposes of the review and this was supplemented by an MSD-developed framework on the key ways to help make New Zealand more socially inclusive. The rapid evidence review's report is structured around answering five key questions:

1. What is social inclusion?
2. Why is it important?
3. What do we know about the extent of diversity and social inclusion in New Zealand?
4. How can we build a more socially inclusive New Zealand?
5. What do we need to understand better?

Draft versions of the rapid evidence review were circulated for review and feedback to the reference group, including some Chief Science Advisors and selected academics, and a selection of key community-based contacts. The rapid evidence review was completed in early June 2019.

# What is social inclusion?

## Defining social inclusion

Defining social inclusion is important and challenging. It is important because it fundamentally shapes how we might work towards a more socially inclusive society and how success gets measured. And it is challenging because there is no general agreement, across a wide literature, about how the concept is defined<sup>1,2</sup>. Despite this, most definitions recognise a few common themes:

- Social inclusion involves having an equitable opportunity to participate, by choice, in everyday activities. As a society we can support social inclusion by ensuring all people have the social, economic, cultural and political resources needed to be able to join in and take up opportunities in everyday activities. Because people do not always start off with the same resources and needs, addressing inequities can mean providing more (or different kinds) of supports to some people to meet their circumstances. It does not necessarily mean treating everyone the same.
- One of the main barriers to social inclusion is prejudiced attitudes and discriminatory behaviours. Prejudice and discrimination can take a variety of forms (including interpersonal as well as structural) and target different characteristics, for example, it may be based on a person's age, culture, beliefs, abilities, family composition, gender identity, sexual orientation, appearance, or income. Common to all these forms of discrimination and prejudice are unequal power relationships. Specifically, prejudice is underpinned by a set of attitudes and beliefs that help maintain and legitimise group-based hierarchy<sup>3</sup>, based on the assumption that some groups of people are inherently superior.
- Social inclusion is a dynamic process that can become self-reinforcing, for better or worse. This means that building social inclusion can help create a "positive spiral" that contributes to the wellbeing of individuals and communities and builds ongoing resilience over time. Conversely, social exclusion does not just reflect a person's present situation (e.g. being unemployed) but can severely limit people's future prospects, sometimes over generations.

Drawing on these common themes, and following the World Bank<sup>2</sup>, for the purposes of this review, we define social inclusion as *the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society – improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity.*

## **New Zealand is a unique context for building social inclusion**

To further clarify the nature of the problem we are trying to address it is important to ground this definition in the specific context of New Zealand. Broadly, we take this definition to mean that social inclusion is the degree to which:

- communities across New Zealand embrace diversity and ensure all people feel recognised and accepted
- people are free from prejudice and discrimination
- people have resources, skills and knowledge to meaningfully participate.

It is important too to recognise the nation's bicultural foundations, the historical and ongoing injustices towards Tangata Whenua, and the evolving Māori-Crown partnership, as fundamental to understanding social inclusion in New Zealand. For some newcomers to New Zealand this bicultural frame is starkly at odds with other multi-cultural settler states and is potentially alienating. By contrast, recent work by Te Puni Kōkiri and Treasury<sup>4</sup> explores the idea that Te Tiriti, a Te Ao Māori perspective, and whānau-centred thinking, together provide the underpinnings for a distinctive, whole-of-Aotearoa New Zealand approach to policy thinking. This approach recognises the centrality of Te Tiriti for the Māori-Crown relationship, as well as its wider applicability and value for supporting social inclusion for all New Zealanders, including both Tangata Whenua and Tangata Tiriti.

### **Related concepts: social cohesion and social capital**

Social inclusion is related to but distinct from the concept of social cohesion, although the distinction is not always clear cut because there is no universally accepted definition of either term. For example, according to one common definition, a socially cohesive society is one where all groups have a sense of "belonging, participation, inclusion, recognition and legitimacy"<sup>5</sup>. By this definition, social inclusion is just one component of social cohesion. Social cohesion is also more commonly used in ways that emphasise the importance of social order, with the implication that some societies may be highly socially cohesive despite socially excluding particular groups. A final point of difference is that social cohesion is typically associated with discussions focussed on ethnic diversity and the marginalisation of migrant groups, whereas social inclusion considers diversity in all its various forms (e.g. age, culture, beliefs, abilities, family composition, gender identity, sexual orientation, appearance or income).

Social capital is another key concept related to social inclusion. Social capital refers to the social connections, attitudes and norms that contribute to societal wellbeing by promoting coordination and collaboration between people and groups in society<sup>6</sup>. The political scientist Robert Putnam also distinguishes between bonding social capital – relationships *within* a demographically similar group (e.g. family members, and/or close friends) – and bridging social capital, or the relationships *between* social groups (e.g. between members of different class, race, religious, or other groups). Bridging capital can be an important outcome of the process of social inclusion and Putnam argues that strengthening bridging social capital is the key to societies realising the benefits of diversity.<sup>6</sup>

# Why does social inclusion matter?

## Realising the benefits of diversity

It is important to articulate, rather than assume, the case for building social inclusion. Indeed there is evidence that mainstream support for diversity in society is stronger when people are aware of the benefits of diversity, rather than focusing on how it is achieved<sup>7</sup>. Partly in recognition of this, there is growing awareness of the potential value of the “diversity dividend” at both an organisational and a national level<sup>9</sup>. For example, long run economic performance is associated with cultural diversity<sup>10</sup> and, to the extent host nations welcome new migrants, the happiness of both migrants and original residents tends to increase<sup>11</sup>. Greater cultural diversity within organisations is also linked to creativity, better, faster, problem solving<sup>12</sup>, and long-term profitability<sup>13</sup>. In New Zealand, it is estimated that achieving gender parity in leadership roles, alone, would deliver a boost to Gross Domestic Product of \$881 million<sup>14</sup>.

## Social inclusion as a legal right and a moral responsibility

Addressing social exclusion also aligns with various pieces of New Zealand legislation, such as the *New Zealand Bill of Rights Act (1990)* and *Human Rights Act (1993)*, and international conventions. For many, social inclusion is also a moral imperative because it is fundamentally about changing society in a way that allows people to realise their potential. The cost of failure is not just borne by the excluded individual themselves but by their families and whānau; their communities, hāpu and iwi; organisations; and the nation as a whole.

## Social inclusion improves health outcomes

Social inclusion also has a significant impact on people’s health outcomes. For example, evidence from nearly 300 studies internationally, involving more than 300,000 participants, links racial discrimination to significantly worse physical and mental health<sup>15,16</sup>, heightened stress responses and unhealthy behaviours<sup>17</sup>. Similar patterns are observed internationally for other forms of discrimination, including internalised-homophobia<sup>18</sup>, mental illness self-stigma<sup>19</sup>, and age, gender, and disability related discrimination<sup>17</sup>.

## **Social inclusion improves justice outcomes**

There are also important links between social inclusion and justice. International evidence<sup>20</sup> shows levels of community social support (linked to bridging capital) are a powerful determinant of crime rates – and much more so than the popularly assumed deterrence effect of, for example, tougher sentencing. To the extent social inclusion fosters a shared sense of being a part of a wider, “moral community”<sup>21</sup>, people’s willingness to abide by laws have been shown to increase<sup>22</sup>. For this reason, Hughes<sup>23</sup> notes that building (especially bridging) social capital needs to be a key focus if we are to make long-term progress towards reducing offending in New Zealand.

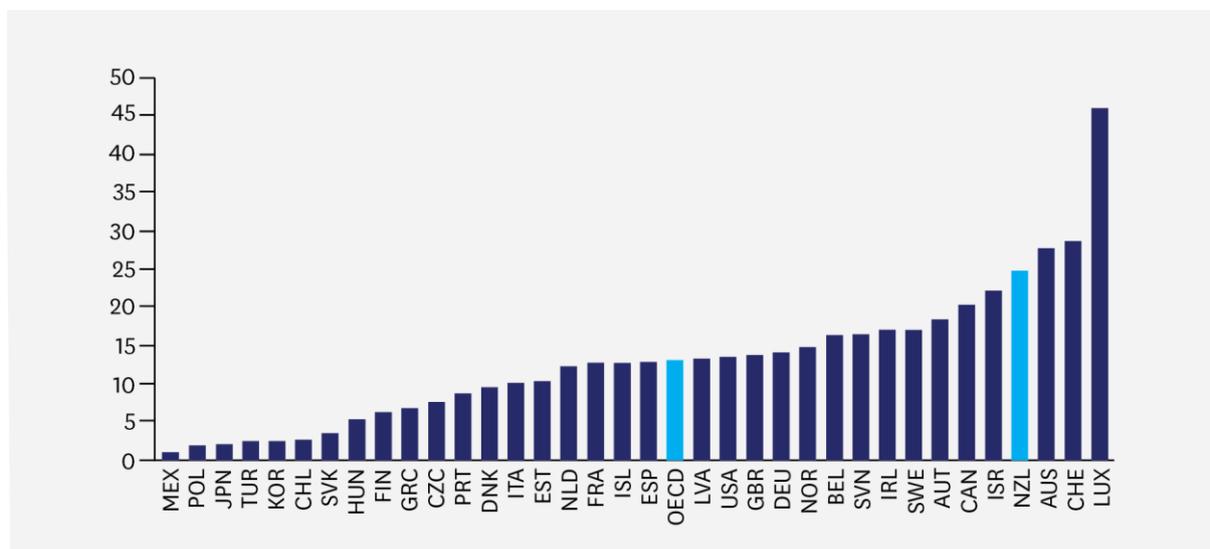
# What do we know about diversity and social inclusion in New Zealand?

## New Zealand is increasingly diverse

New Zealand is much more diverse than many people assume. The nation has the fourth highest proportion of overseas born residents among OECD nations (see Figure 1) and Auckland has been ranked as the fourth most ethnically diverse city in the world<sup>24</sup>. The nation is home to people from 213 different ethnic groups (more ethnicities than there are countries in the world), there are over 150 languages spoken, including the three official languages (English, Māori and New Zealand Sign Language), and more than 50 per cent of people living in New Zealand report at least one religious affiliation.

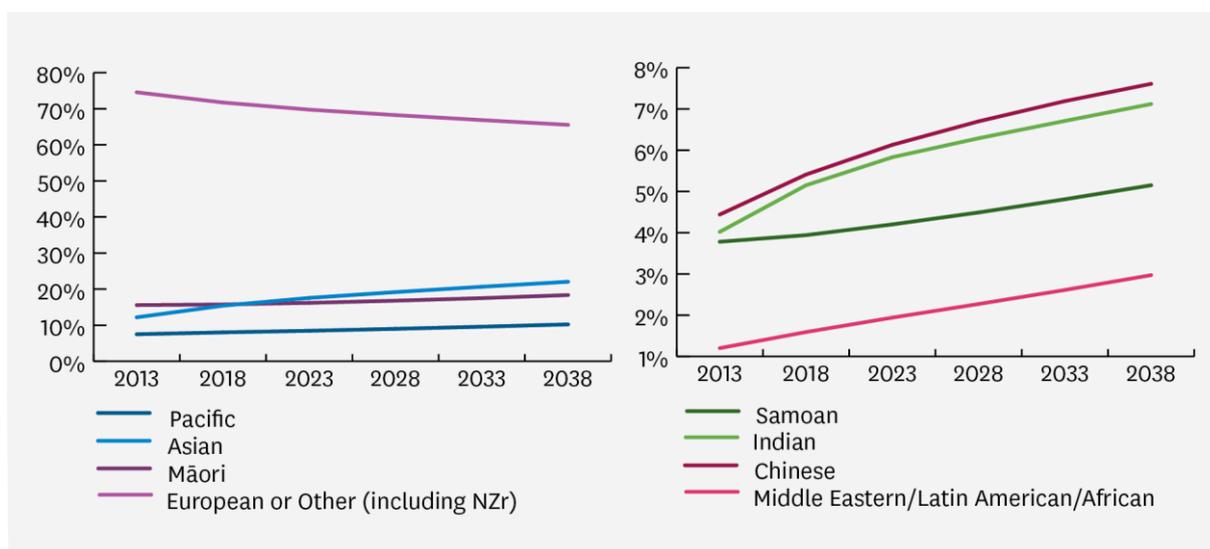
Perhaps most astonishing is the projected rate of change in who New Zealanders are and where and how they live, as shown in Figure 2. It is projected that within ten years 40 per cent of New Zealanders will live in Auckland, Asian communities will outnumber Māori and people aged over 65 will outnumber those aged 0 to 14. The number of Pacific peoples will increase from 7.4 per cent to 10 per cent of the total population, the majority of whom will be younger than 25 years old<sup>25</sup>. Within 20 years, population growth will stagnate or decline in the majority of New Zealand's territorial authorities, Auckland will experience 60 per cent of all population growth, and the number of Indian and Chinese New Zealanders is projected to nearly double<sup>26</sup>.

**Figure 1: Proportion of the New Zealand population born overseas, compared to other OECD nations**



Source: OECD

**Figure 2: Ethnic share of the New Zealand population, 2013-38**



Diversity within New Zealand is also more complex than what is reflected in routinely reported socio-demographic data. Along with most other contemporary societies globally, there is an increasing awareness that diversity in New Zealand is becoming more dynamic, cross-cutting, inter-connected and multifaceted – a phenomenon sometimes referred to as “hyperdiversity”<sup>27</sup>. This hyperdiversity is driven in part by the unprecedented growth in the global flow of people, goods, services and information. The digital revolution allows people across the world to mobilise online and forge vibrant online identities relating, for example, to lifestyles, attitudes, political beliefs and shared activities. At the same time,

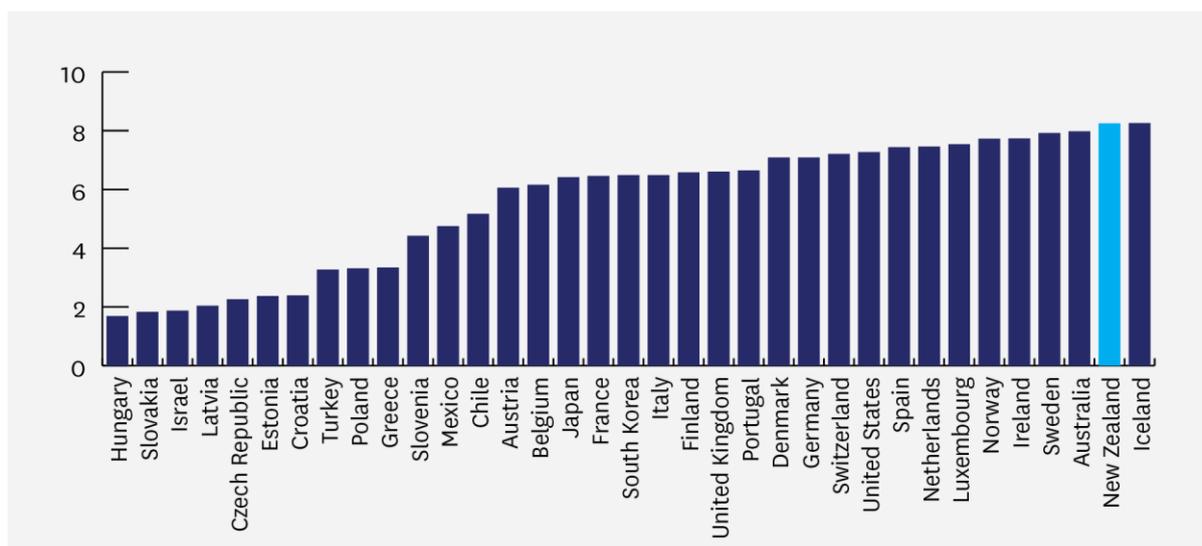
structural changes to the economy have profoundly reshaped patterns of employment and work, housing, transport, and immigration. Changes in societal norms within New Zealand have also led to an increasing awareness and openness towards people with diverse sexual orientations<sup>28,29</sup> and a more fluid understanding of gender categories. Family and household structures are also becoming more complex and diverse, with increasingly “fuzzy” transitions between life stages leading to more people living in multi-generational households at the same time as there are more people living alone<sup>30</sup>.

The implications of these unprecedented and rapidly unfolding social and demographic changes for public policy in New Zealand are substantial. The often unstated assumption that “diversity” is somehow an exception, rather than woven into the fabric of the lives of all New Zealanders, is now even more untenable than it ever was. Hyperdiversity further implies that policy makers will need to get much better at understanding the nature and complexity of diversity within New Zealand at the same time as the data that gets collected to inform decision making struggles to keep up with change. On top of all this, many post-industrial societies are wrestling with big questions about how to ensure the benefits and opportunities that come with hyperdiversity are valued and equitably shared<sup>31</sup>.

### **Compared to other nations, New Zealand is relatively accepting of migrant diversity**

By some measures, New Zealand is a comparatively inclusive nation. For example, New Zealand ranks a close second out of 149 nations surveyed on a migrant acceptance index that summarises host nations’ level of acceptance towards new migrants (as shown in figure 3 for OECD nations<sup>11</sup>). This is consistent with data from the New Zealand General Social Survey showing that the great majority of New Zealanders are accepting of diverse social groups and multiculturalism specifically – although there is some data suggesting these rates may be overstated<sup>32</sup>.

**Figure 3: Migrant acceptance index scores across OECD nations**



Source: Gallup, 2017

At the same time, because social inclusion is inherently multi-dimensional, and encompasses a much wider range of groups than just migrants, there is no single summary measure of social inclusion. When considering a potential suite of indicators, there are also fundamental limits on the extent to which quantitative data can capture the experience, context and complexity of diverse groups. While noting these challenges, Spoonley and colleagues<sup>33</sup> have proposed an indicator framework for measuring social cohesion that provides a useful guide for measuring social inclusion for a wide range of groups. Informed in part by this framework, three potential headline indicators of social inclusion are:

- objective measures assessing participation and whether different groups have equitable wellbeing outcomes (e.g. employment, education, justice and health outcomes)
- self-reported measures of wider societal attitudes towards specific social groups (e.g. warmth and acceptance ratings)
- self-reported measures of experienced discrimination and racism, broken down by specific social groups.

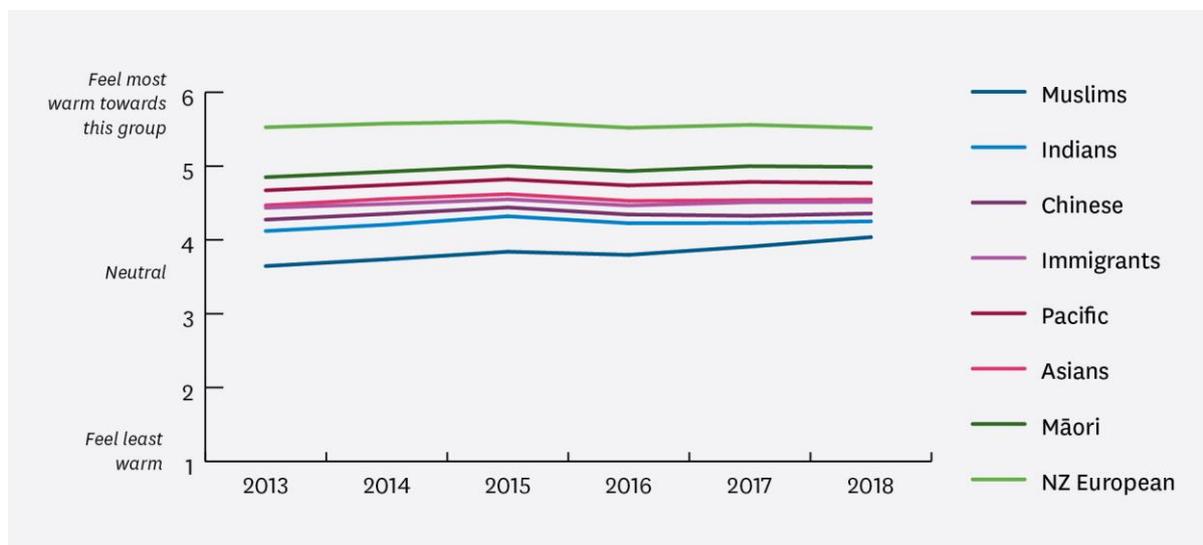
## **There is clear evidence that many diverse groups are socially excluded**

Measures of participation, societal attitudes and self-reported discrimination all paint a more sobering picture about the extent of social inclusion within New Zealand. For example, there is consistent evidence of:

- structural and institutional discrimination, as reflected in systematic and long standing disparities on measures of education, employment, income, justice and health outcomes experienced by diverse social groups<sup>16,34,35</sup>
- persistent and marked disparities in New Zealanders' attitudes towards selected social groups. Data captured annually through the New Zealand Attitudes and Values survey, for example, shows that New Zealanders overall consistently rate European New Zealanders more favourably than a range of other social groups
- Data from StatsNZ's 2016 General Social Survey shows that approximately 17 per cent of all New Zealanders report having experienced discrimination in the last 12 months. Compared to this overall rate, the rates are markedly higher for younger people (e.g. 24% of 15-24 year olds), women (19.3%), the unemployed (27.3%), people who do not own their own home (21.8%), single parents (26.9%), recent migrants (25.8%), non-Europeans (e.g. 22.7% of Māori and 24.3% of Asians), and people with a disability (21.9%). Figure 5 shows the wide variety of reported reasons as to why people are discriminated against.

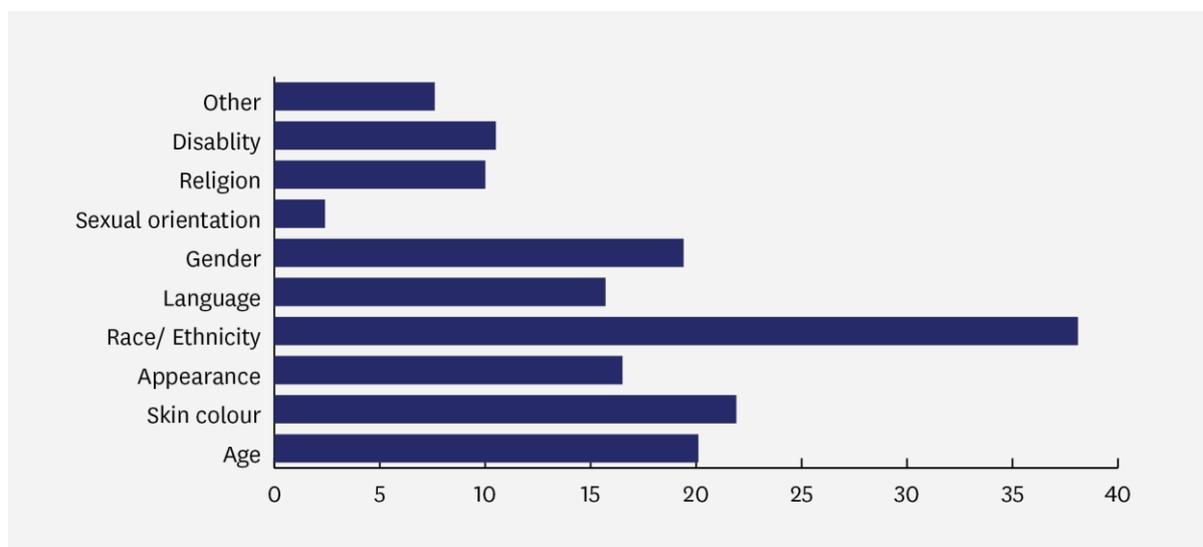
On balance, the evidence points to a very mixed picture about the extent of social inclusion within New Zealand. Although a majority of New Zealanders claim to be accepting of diversity, there are still substantial numbers of New Zealanders who are left behind and marginalised because of discrimination and prejudice. Some commentators also note not only a lack of awareness but also a reluctance to acknowledge the extent of the problem<sup>36</sup>.

**Figure 4: New Zealanders' self-rated warmth towards selected ethnic and religious groups**



Source: New Zealand Attitudes and Values Survey 2013-2018

**Figure 5: Percentage reported type(s) of discrimination (within the 17 per cent who reported experiencing discrimination in the last 12 months)\***



Source: StatsNZ, General Social Survey 2016

\*NOTE: This reporting does not consider the underlying prevalence of the characteristic that people reported being discriminated against. For example, although 2.4 per cent of people who experienced discrimination reported that this was based on *their* sexual orientation, the prevalence is likely to be much higher as a proportion of New Zealanders who do not identify as heterosexual (i.e. approximately 3 to 5 per cent of the total population, according to Ministry of Health, New Zealand Health Survey data).

# How can we build a more socially inclusive New Zealand?

Six ways to strengthen social inclusion:

1. Fostering common values and inclusive social norms.
2. Encouraging and facilitating positive interactions between people.
3. Tackling harms to inclusion, including prejudice, discrimination, and other harmful behaviours.
4. Supporting people to have the knowledge and skills they need to participate.
5. Supporting people to have a voice and feel heard.
6. Reducing inequality and improving opportunities for people by providing support and resources.

In this review, we summarise New Zealand and international evidence for six key ways to strengthen social inclusion, as set out above. These key ways reflect underlying themes within evidence drawn from diverse literatures, spanning multiple disciplines. Because social inclusion is an inherently systemic, complex, and context-dependent process there are no simple answers, nor discrete interventions, that will mechanically increase social inclusion. Instead, each of the six ways point to some core ideas about what matters, what hinders and what might help to build social inclusion. Importantly too, although the six ways are discussed separately, in reality they interact and often mutually reinforce each other. This is discussed briefly towards the end of this review but needs to be kept in mind when considering the evidence for each of the six key ways.

The systemic nature of social inclusion also means that the process of building social inclusion does not sit with single individuals, organisations, or institutions. Instead, progress requires a sustained effort on the part of a wide range of actors, at multiple levels, involving a breadth of activities – from individual efforts and personal leadership, to grassroots campaigns to universal and targeted interventions right through to changes to wider policy settings and institutional safeguards. Central government can play an important leadership role facilitating and enabling these activities, but progress ultimately depends on wider buy-in and support from individuals, communities and organisations across the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

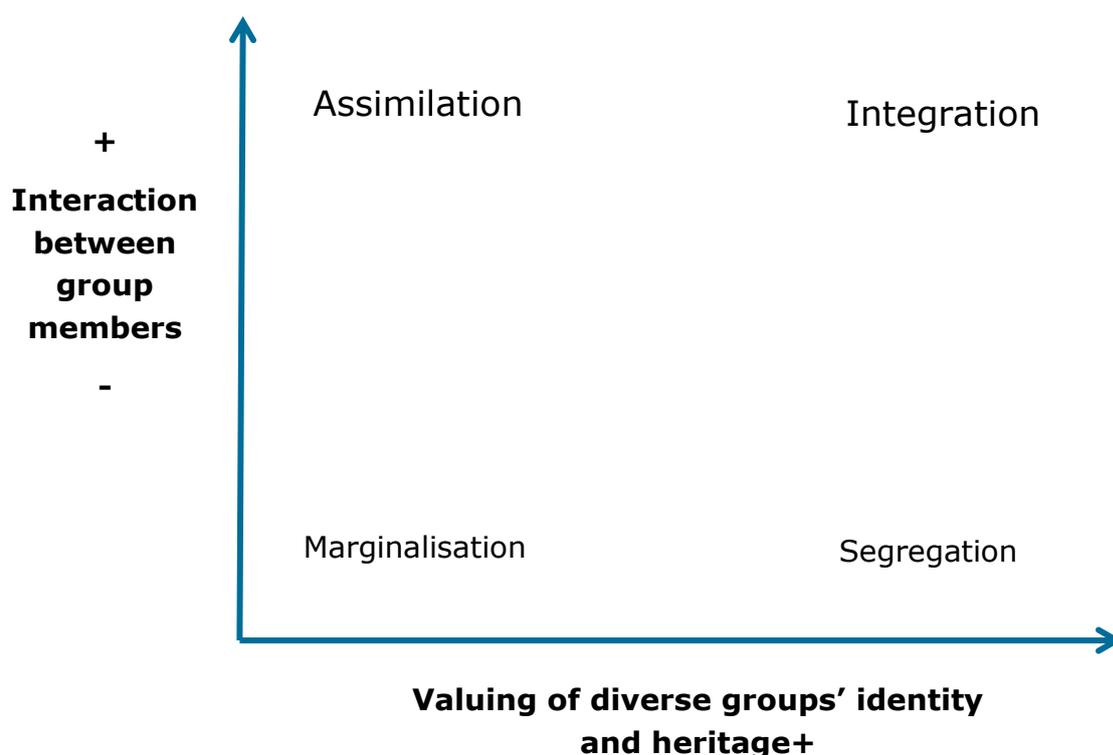
# 1. Fostering common values and inclusive social norms

- Social inclusion can be supported by building an inclusive national identity – one that values diverse groups’ heritage and culture; encourages all groups to positively interact with each other; and upholds shared, civic norms.
- Te Tiriti, and the principles of participation, protection and partnership, could provide a positive and distinctive foundation for building an inclusive Aotearoa New Zealand.
- Leaders, at all levels, play a crucial role in supporting an ongoing national conversation about building a socially inclusive New Zealand.

Many researchers argue that creating an inclusive sense of national identity is an important means, if not a precondition, for building a nation in which diverse groups can feel safe and genuinely accepted<sup>2,6,37-39</sup>. This view is consistent with extensive psychological research showing that a shared and inclusive group identification is the key to building trust<sup>40</sup>, encouraging individuals to cooperate and uphold pro-social norms, feel empathy towards fellow ingroup members<sup>41</sup>, and make sacrifices for the wellbeing of the wider group<sup>42</sup>. Importantly too, an inclusive national identity does not require people’s individuality, or various cultural, religious, ethnic or other important identities be diminished. It is not a zero sum game – people can feel a strong sense of attachment to multiple group identities, at various levels of inclusiveness, all of which help contribute to a person’s sense of self<sup>43</sup>. Furthermore, as shown in Figure 6, diversity within society can be successfully integrated (as opposed to being marginalised, assimilated or segregated<sup>44</sup>) to the extent that citizens within a society collectively:

1. support and value the maintenance of diverse groups’ heritage, culture and identity
2. expect that all groups (including the dominant group) engage and interact with each other.

**Figure 6: Strategies of Ethnocultural groups**



## **An inclusive New Zealand: opportunities, challenges and critical success factors**

The process of building an inclusive national identity involves ongoing national conversations that play out at all levels of society. To support these conversations, the evidence points to a number of strengths, challenges and critical success factors that are particularly relevant to the New Zealand context:

- **New Zealanders overwhelmingly support an inclusive national identity (at least symbolically).** New Zealand research<sup>45</sup> indicates widespread support for integration, as opposed to segregation, marginalisation or assimilation. New Zealanders also consider acceptance of diversity in principle, and symbolic biculturalism, as a central part of what being a 'true' New Zealander means<sup>46</sup>. However, there is also evidence that New Zealanders, especially European New Zealanders, tend to reject the idea of giving some groups more resources so they can participate equally in society<sup>47-49</sup>.
- **A national identity defined in terms of civic, rather than ethnic, terms is critical.** There is evidence that the more European New Zealanders identify as 'white New Zealanders' the less supportive they are of multiculturalism<sup>50</sup>. By contrast, having a national identity defined in terms of civic and democratic norms, predicts positive support for multiculturalism.

This reinforces the idea that a strong national identity, per se, is not problematic – it is the normative understanding and meaning of that national identity that shapes people’s attitudes towards, and willingness to embrace, diversity<sup>51</sup>. It is important therefore to reinforce the centrality of civic norms, including an openness and curiosity towards diverse view points, and being able to discuss ideas and disagree respectfully.

- **Conversations about national identity must recognise unequal power relationships, and past and ongoing injustices.** Some groups have a disproportionate voice in national conversations about how, and on what terms, diversity should be accommodated. At a minimum, an awareness and acknowledgement of this pre-existing privilege, as well as ongoing and historical injustices experienced by some groups, is an essential part of any conversation about building a truly inclusive sense of national identity.
- **Te Tiriti principles can help underpin an inclusive national identity.** Several researchers note that the bicultural foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand are not just compatible with diversity more broadly, but that Te Tiriti can positively support the promotion and protection of diversity<sup>52,53</sup>. At the same time there are a range of views on this point that need to be acknowledged<sup>54,55</sup>.
- **Leadership, at all levels, plays a critical role.** There is extensive evidence that leaders across the community play a pivotal role in building a shared sense of identity and validating people’s collective understanding of social norms<sup>56</sup>. These norms in turn are powerful determinants of people’s attitudes, beliefs and behaviours<sup>57</sup> – for example people’s attitudes towards diversity, people’s willingness to engage with diverse social groups, and whether and how people can disagree respectfully. Given the challenges and sensitivities in negotiating an inclusive national identity, it might be tempting to avoid such discussions altogether. The risk with such an approach is that diversity within New Zealand is not going away (it is increasing) and there is no shortage of groups seeking to fill the vacuum with potentially divisive alternative narratives about what it means to be a “true” New Zealander<sup>58</sup>.

## Some practical implications and examples of best practise in New Zealand

Already there are a range of practical efforts, and examples of leadership, aimed at promoting an inclusive national identity, including:

- Social media campaigns involving leaders across New Zealand publicly speaking out in support of diversity. For example, the “NZ Leaders Stand Together” campaign aims to “enable a better, safer, more inclusive country that embraces diversity for our people” and has received widespread support from senior leaders across major New Zealand organisations, including the Reserve Bank of New Zealand and Ernst & Young.
- There are a wide range of community led initiatives that promote an inclusive national identity. For example, ‘Huarahi Hou: Pathway to Treaty-based Multicultural Communities’ is a community-led initiative founded on the strong belief that cultural contact between migrants and the receiving community will smooth the path to successful settlement. To build strong and sustainable relationships between new migrants and local iwi, hāpu and whānau, Regional Multicultural Members Councils and local iwi have organised opportunities for migrants to visit marae, including an overnight stay (a noho), which has been run at five localities. An evaluation of a 2017 Noho at the Orongomai Marae in Upper Hutt found it to be successful in providing a positive and valued cultural exchange, as demonstrated by improvements in awareness and understanding by participants, which affirms the positive impact that inter-cultural connections can have on the migrant experience of settling in and developing a sense of belonging in New Zealand<sup>59</sup>.
- The ‘Welcoming Communities’ programme/ te Wharoa ki ngā hāpori, developed in partnership between local and central government, aims to help local communities provide support to recently arrived migrants. The programme includes a Welcoming Communities standard that specifically encompasses “inclusive leadership” as a key determinant of what makes a welcoming community. This includes an expectation that leaders “model the principles of inclusiveness, openness, tolerance, respect and acceptance of all cultures in the community”.
- Treaty training provides a critically important way for people to understand New Zealand’s bicultural foundations and build a shared understanding of core civic principles that underpin Te Tiriti and New Zealand’s wider constitutional architecture. The Tangata Tiriti programme is specifically designed for new migrants to New Zealand and helps explain the key principles of the treaty and how multicultural diversity can be supported by the principles within Te Tiriti.

## 2. Encouraging and facilitating positive interactions between people

- There is very strong evidence that encouraging and enabling diverse groups to positively interact with each other changes people's attitudes for the better.
- The policy implications of this are wide-ranging, including the need to ensure schools, communities, workplaces, institutions and media representations better reflect New Zealand's diversity, as well as facilitating and normalising positive interactions between diverse groups.
- Opportunities for diverse groups to interact are hampered by spatial segregation. There is some evidence of this in parts of New Zealand, especially in Auckland. Addressing this complex issue needs to consider a range of sometimes competing factors, including wider structural drivers like housing costs and structural discrimination.

Creating the conditions in society that allow people from diverse groups to interact meaningfully with each other is an essential ingredient to successful social integration and inclusion. The evidence base supporting the positive effects of "inter-group contact" is overwhelming. A meta-analysis including nearly 700 data samples, involving more than 250,000 participants, across 38 countries, finds that 94 per cent of studies show a positive relationship between contact across groups and less prejudiced attitudes<sup>60</sup>. The effect is reliably observed in real world settings<sup>61</sup>, the effect is causal, and robust across different types of prejudice, including: mental health stigma<sup>62</sup>; discrimination based on sexual orientation<sup>63</sup>; and gender identity, physical disability, age, ethnicity and religion<sup>64</sup>.

Key limitations of so called "contact theory" include that: most of the evidence comes from studies involving younger people and fewer track longer term outcomes (although this is changing); negative interaction experiences can sometimes undermine any positive effects of contact<sup>65</sup>; contact is less effective for changing minority group attitudes; and contact can make disadvantaged groups more accepting of unfair situations<sup>66</sup>.

The basic ideas of contact theory have been qualified and further extended in a number of important ways:

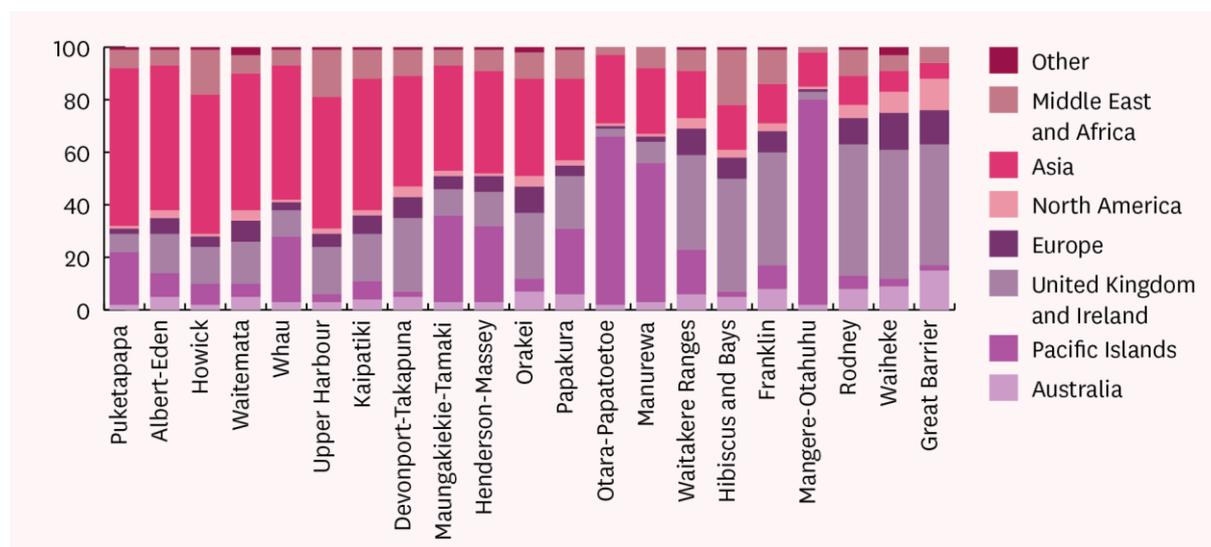
- **There are optimal conditions.** The contact effect is strongest in situations where people are of equal status and interdependent (rather than competing) and where the interaction is supported by a relevant authority (e.g. a school or workplace). It should be noted that the contact effect is still observed even without these optimal conditions.
- **The effect generalises**<sup>67</sup>. Intergroup contact does not merely change people's attitudes towards individuals, but extends to people's attitudes towards the wider social group. For this reason, it is important that intergroup contact experiences make salient, rather than downplay, people's group memberships<sup>68</sup>.
- **Indirect and virtual contact works too**<sup>69</sup>. Observing positive cross-group interactions within one's neighbourhood<sup>70</sup>, or knowing that people in your group have cross-group friendships, changes attitudes. Even seeing or reading about positive inter-group interactions on TV, online, or in books, changes attitudes for the better<sup>71</sup>. This is particularly important when considering changing attitudes to less common groups or groups that are not visibly distinguishable (e.g. people experiencing mental illness).
- **Normalising diversity, reducing anxiety, and debunking stereotypes are key.** The reason why contact reduces prejudice appears to be because it helps disconfirm negative stereotypes about a group, it helps reduce intergroup anxiety, and builds empathy. All three are important, especially the latter two<sup>72</sup>. There is also evidence that experiencing and observing positive interactions between groups helps to normalise diversity and foster an overarching, more inclusive sense of "us" that cuts across group boundaries<sup>73</sup>.

## Applying contact theory in the New Zealand context

There are a large number of existing activities and interventions across New Zealand that are consistent with the basic tenants of contact theory. Some practical implications in the New Zealand context include the need to:

- consider the role of school zoning decisions in promoting diversity within schools. For example, Auckland is the most ethnically diverse region within New Zealand, but has the largest gap between the level of diversity within schools compared to the diversity within the region as a whole<sup>74</sup>. Careful consideration needs to be given to the complexities of this issue to guard against unintended consequences that can occur<sup>75</sup>
- consider the role of urban planning, housing and transport in facilitating mixing between groups, while being aware of the importance of maintaining intra-group networks<sup>76,77</sup>, especially for recently arrived migrant groups. Figure 7 shows significant disparities in the spatial distribution of ethnic diversity in Auckland

**Figure 7: New Zealand 2013 Census Regional Summary**



- encourage media representations that reflect New Zealand’s diversity and make positive interactions visible and in a way that counters stereotypes<sup>46</sup>. For example, the ‘Like Minds, Like Mine’ programme produces media awareness guidance on the representation of people with mental illness, directly informed by contact theory. The programme has engaged with popular TV shows like *Shortland Street* to change stereotyped representations of people experiencing mental illness
- strive for much greater diversity within organisations and institutions than is currently the case. There is extensive evidence that the diversity within public

and private organisations and institutions are far from representative of the wider population<sup>78,79</sup>

- create safe, accessible, diversity-friendly spaces in urban areas, workplaces, schools and other institutions that allow different groups to mix and interact, and be *seen* interacting. There is also a need to be aware of, and seek to understand, the *resegregation* phenomena (where people re-cluster within groups within a particular environment) and look at ways to facilitate cross-cutting ties
- support opportunities for inter-faith dialogue<sup>80</sup>, such as the New Zealand Abrahamic council and New Zealand interfaith group
- support sporting<sup>81</sup>, volunteering and cultural activities<sup>82</sup> that allow positive intergroup contact to occur. These specific activities have been demonstrated to predict a sense of community in New Zealand<sup>83</sup>
- in schools specifically, consider evidence-informed contact interventions, noting that the early years provide a critical window for modifying long-term beliefs and attitudes<sup>84,85</sup>, including:
  - stories representing positive intergroup contact<sup>71</sup>, ideally in a New Zealand context
  - cooperative learning<sup>86</sup>
  - online intergroup interaction programmes<sup>87</sup>.

### **3.Tackling harms to inclusion, including, prejudice, discrimination and other harmful behaviours**

- There is clear evidence that many New Zealanders routinely experience prejudice and discrimination, which negatively affects people's wellbeing and prevents people from participating.
- This discrimination takes a variety of forms and includes not just interpersonal but also structural discrimination and prejudice.
- Comprehensive, evidence-based strategies and ongoing monitoring are needed to prevent and limit these impacts, especially in schools and workplaces where most prejudice and discrimination occurs.

It is important to understand and address the different forms of discrimination, prejudice and anti-social behaviour that are key barriers to cross-group contact and directly undermine social inclusion. Common to all of these forms of discrimination and prejudice is the role of specific ideologies, attitudes and beliefs that help maintain and legitimize unfair hierarchies, based on the belief that some groups are inherently superior to others. The following outlines some of the key types of negative discrimination.

Type of  
discrimination    Definitions and some New Zealand examples

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**Unconscious bias**    A bias people are unaware of and that happens partly outside of their control. For example, there is evidence that New Zealanders tend to unconsciously rate Pakeha New Zealanders and Māori as more authentically a part of New Zealand compared to Asian New Zealanders<sup>88,89</sup>. However, some note that subconscious bias is a relatively weak predictor of overt discrimination<sup>90</sup>.

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**Self-stigma**    When people internalise negative public attitudes about their situation or circumstances and experience negative consequences as a result.

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**Everyday or “modern” discrimination**    A comparatively common but less overt form of discrimination that can take a wide variety of forms, for example, the “racism of low expectations” or when people hold patronising or ambivalent attitudes towards a particular group. For example, some New Zealanders systematically stereotype certain groups as “warm but incompetent”, rather than necessarily derogating groups on both dimensions<sup>46</sup>.

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**Blatant discrimination**    Various forms of overt racism ranging from hate speech through to violent extremism. Evidence from a survey of New Zealanders run by Netsafe<sup>91</sup> suggested that around 11 per cent of respondents experienced hate speech online.

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**Organisational and structural discrimination**    A process in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate group inequity. There is extensive evidence of institutional discrimination across New Zealand’s health<sup>16,92–94</sup>, justice<sup>95</sup>, education<sup>96</sup>, and child protection systems and in employment practices<sup>97</sup>.

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**Multiple and intersectional discrimination**    Discrimination on the basis of more than one ground (e.g. ethnicity *and* gender), and in ways that are more than merely “additive”<sup>98</sup>. For example, StatsNZ census data shows that Māori, Pacific and Asian women generally get

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paid less than European men and women, and Māori, Pacific and Asian men<sup>99</sup>.

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## Calling out everyday racism and discrimination

Despite the popularity of a wide range of “diversity training” programmes that specifically aim to address modern discrimination and unconscious bias, the evidence for these interventions is limited<sup>85,100,101</sup>. Diversity training has generally been found to have no impact on the representation of disadvantaged groups<sup>102</sup>, and the impact on attitudes towards diversity varies from beneficial in some contexts to no or a relatively modest negative effect in others<sup>103</sup>. One of the challenges faced by these programmes is the tendency for people to become defensive, and even intensify their prejudice, when confronted<sup>104</sup>. Some key, evidence-based strategies<sup>105</sup> for responding effectively to modern discrimination include:

- speaking out against discriminatory behaviours and remarks. Saying nothing serves to normalise discrimination
- focusing on changing discriminatory attitudes within your own group, not other groups
- thinking carefully before directly calling a person prejudiced or racist. Focus instead on more indirect challenges, such as appeals to common values (“are you giving x a fair go?”) or perspective taking (“what would you do in their shoes?”)
- emphasising the widespread support for diversity within New Zealand. Highlighting that “racism is everywhere and needs to be stopped”, although well-intentioned, can inadvertently normalise racism.

Schools and workplaces need to be a major front for combatting this everyday discrimination and are ideal places for providing education. Data from New Zealand’s General Social Survey show that, of those who report experiencing discrimination in the last 12 months, nearly 50 per cent report that this occurred in their work or job. Similarly, data from the Youth2000 survey indicate discrimination, by both peers and teachers, is comparatively high<sup>106</sup>.

## Tackling hate speech, violent extremism and other forms of blatant discrimination

Although not all prejudice leads to violent hatred, all violent hatred starts with prejudice. Addressing everyday prejudice and discrimination is therefore an important first step in delegitimising and denormalising the ideologies that underpin violent hatred. There is also an increasing understanding about the role of online social networks in fostering and validating extremist ideologies that underpin various radical groups (e.g. alt-right, white nationalist, Islamic terrorist, and violently misogynistic/“incel” groups). Of particular concern is the pervasiveness of these social networks, their capacity to connect and mobilise diffusely spread sympathisers, and to create an “echo chamber” that amplifies and entrenches extreme anti-social views.

Several models have been proposed that aim to help understand and intervene to limit various forms of radical extremism. For example, Kruglanski’s “needs, narrative and networks” model<sup>107</sup> highlights the importance of: an individual’s need to feel significant; a narrative that involves an ideology of group-based injustice that justifies the use of violence; and a network of fellow sympathisers that validate these beliefs. Various prevention strategies have been developed focusing on intervention points at different levels. These include universal interventions to limit, as well as address, the underlying sense of deprivation and alienation that contribute to the need for significance; targeting and, where possible, dismantling online and face-to-face extremist networks; using reformed members of extremist groups to help de-radicalise extremists; and attempting to delegitimise the racist narratives and ideologies on which extremist groups depend<sup>108</sup>.

## Addressing institutional discrimination

Addressing institutional discrimination needs to be a core priority given its central role in entrenching longstanding disparities experienced by diverse social groups in New Zealand<sup>16,109</sup>. A particular challenge is that, by its nature, institutional discrimination can often be diffuse, and the victims of discrimination may be unaware, or resigned, to their unfair treatment. Data from the Human Rights Commission also highlights the increasing issue of intersectional discrimination within institutions. For example, the number of discrimination complaints based on more than one ground have increased from nine per cent in 2011/12 to 15 per cent in 2015/16, in line with New Zealand’s growing diversity.

Evidence suggests a systematic approach to institutional discrimination is required<sup>110</sup> including: increasing diversity within organisations and institutions; independent and transparent monitoring and reporting to assess equity of outcomes across different groups; development of best-practise guidelines and

auditing processes; as well as strong legislative and regulatory oversights to actively safeguard people's rights and drive ongoing system-level change and accountability. Particular care needs to be taken to ensure that these measures are monitored to avoid widely noted unintended consequences. For example, reporting of group inequities needs to adopt a strengths-based approach with the aim of redressing inequities, so as not to blame or further stigmatise socially marginalised groups.

## **Supporting victims, and perpetrators, of discrimination**

Supporting the many victims of discrimination is critical for breaking long-term cycles of distress, fear and injustice experienced by affected individuals, their families and communities. In particular, there is now clear evidence about the long term, negative impacts of:

- various forms of "self-stigma", including internalised homophobia<sup>18</sup>, transphobia, weight-related and mental illness self-stigma<sup>111,112</sup>
- trauma experienced by victims and witnesses of hate speech and ideologically motivated violence
- family violence
- bullying, racism and homophobia
- the impacts of systemic discrimination on people's health, educational, justice and wellbeing outcomes.

There is also increasing awareness that perpetrators of discrimination need support too, without in any way condoning their discriminatory attitudes and behaviours. This is critical to stemming the widely noted intergenerational transmission of violence<sup>113</sup>, discrimination and prejudice<sup>114,115</sup>.

## **Using online tools to promote social inclusion**

There is an emerging understanding that various online tools and social media are a powerful medium for not just undermining but also potentially promoting social inclusion<sup>116</sup>. For example, social media can enhance access to valuable social support networks for marginalised or excluded groups such as LGBTIQ youth.

Online tools are also being used in innovative ways in educational contexts to help support social inclusion outcomes. For example, at the UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable development, digital educational games have been developed that deal with contentious topics including domestic violence and discrimination, and that allow students to role-play online chats with virtual interlocutors. As part of the game, students who are able to effectively challenge racist views are rewarded as UNESCO "ambassadors". Although promising, much more evidence is needed to assess whether and how these initiatives can promote social inclusion outcomes.

## Some practical implications and examples in New Zealand

There are a range of programmes and institutional protections across New Zealand that aim to highlight and address the causes and consequences of discrimination, at different levels, including:

- a major cross-agency work programme being led by the Ministry of Education that aims to ensure children are free from racism, discrimination and stigma. This work programme is informed by extensive consultation across schools and communities and adopts a “Systems Approach” to understanding the underlying drivers and dynamics that contribute to racism and discrimination for both children and their care givers.
- institutional mechanisms such as the Human Rights Commission provide critical, institutional safeguards for keeping people safe and holding individuals and institutions accountable for discrimination by providing data and evidence on discrimination in New Zealand.
- the New Zealand Diversity Survey<sup>79</sup> highlights that across public and private sector organisations there is significant variation in the extent to which diversity policies and programmes are implemented, monitored or evaluated. Fewer than 50 per cent of organisations surveyed reported having any policies, programmes or initiatives aimed at addressing diversity issues related to disability, gender, ethnicity, bias, sexuality, religion or aging.
- the Education Review Office<sup>117</sup> found significant variability in schools’ responses to bullying. For example, 17 per cent of New Zealand schools were rated as working towards a bullying free environment to only a “limited extent”. The research suggested that further progress may require a more targeted approach to specific issues of racism and homophobia, rather than a generic bullying strategy.

## 4. Supporting people to have the knowledge and skills they need to participate

- Ensuring equitable access to education and training, that adapts to meet people's diverse needs, is a critical long-term driver of social inclusion.
- An inclusive education system gives all New Zealanders the social and emotional skills needed to understand and appreciate diverse perspectives.
- An inclusive education system empowers people from diverse backgrounds to be able to participate socially and economically.

### Education and social inclusion

Education is the single most important long-term determinant of people's social and economic participation<sup>118,119</sup>. Education levels predict a wide range of measures of civic and social engagement, including voter turnout and political tolerance<sup>114</sup>, generalised trust, attitudes towards multiculturalism and prejudice. There are a range of reasons why education is thought have such wide-ranging, positive impacts on indicators of social capital and social inclusion. As well as providing the knowledge and skills needed to gain employment and income, education exposes people to diverse viewpoints; provides foundational socio-emotional skills needed to negotiate one's own needs while considering the needs of others<sup>120</sup>; as well as opportunities for meaningful contact with diverse groups<sup>121</sup>.

### A socially inclusive education system is one that meets the unique needs, culture and experience of different learners

The key to building a socially inclusive education system is to ensure schools and other educational institutions adapt to meet students' diverse needs, culture and context. Children and young people learn better when their needs are understood, and their identity, language, culture and personal qualities are

recognised, respected and valued by the learning community<sup>122,123</sup>. An evidence-based example of this approach is the school-wide positive behaviour support (SWPBS) programme which aims to support a school culture and provide individual supports to promote positive behaviours. Research has shown Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports (PBIS) improve pro-social behaviour, school climate, and academic achievement, while also reducing discipline referrals, problem behaviour, and school exclusion<sup>124</sup>.

## **Providing equitable access to information, skills and educational opportunities throughout life**

It is easy to take for granted the power that comes from being able to access the information needed for myriad day-to-day transactions. But for some New Zealanders this information is out of reach. Various mentoring programmes show some promise in redressing this by providing skilled migrants local knowledge and access to industry networks to allow better job-skill matching<sup>124</sup>. Bridging programmes can also help by providing advanced language training specific to an immigrant's occupation and providing pathways to allow accreditation for regulated professions<sup>125</sup>.

## **Some practical implications and examples in New Zealand**

- The school wide PB4L programme is a New Zealand programme based on the School-wide PBIS model. However, at present, there is limited evidence from New Zealand on the outcomes of this programme on social and emotional skills. There may be value in refreshing this programme and testing how best to promote the skills and knowledge that could be related to inclusion.
- The New Zealand Migrant Settlement and Integration Strategy aims to provide tailored information and services to support positive employment, education, English language, inclusion and health and wellbeing outcomes. This is a critically important programme for giving migrants to New Zealand the social and cultural knowledge they need to be able to participate fully.
- E Tū Whānau works with Māori and refugee and migrant communities throughout the country, facilitating a locally led, strength-based approach that focuses on increasing wellbeing, a sense of belonging, and making homes and communities vibrant and safe. A formative evaluation<sup>126</sup> found there is good evidence that the underlying approach and values have worked well with Māori, whānau who belong to gangs, and refugee and migrant communities alike, supporting trusting engagement and ownership of actions.

## 5. Supporting people to have a voice and feel heard

- There is extensive evidence that giving people a voice, ensuring people feel heard, and treating people fairly contributes to people's sense of trust, civic participation, and willingness to make compromises for the common good.
- Providing equitable access to these opportunities would help address the marked disparities in institutional trust experienced by marginalised groups in New Zealand.

### The importance of voice and procedural fairness

One of the main determinants of whether people perceive a process to be fair is whether people are given the opportunity to have a voice and feel heard<sup>127</sup>. Importantly, there is extensive evidence that whether people perceive they have been treated fairly profoundly shapes whether people feel included in society as well as people's willingness to engage and cooperate<sup>128,129</sup>. For example, it has been shown that when national institutions (e.g. the criminal justice system) are perceived to treat some groups less fairly than others, then it sends a potent signal to members of those groups that they are not truly accepted and valued by the wider society those institutions purport to represent<sup>130</sup>. People from marginalised groups who are treated unfairly infer that "they" do not really represent or value "us".

By contrast, authorities and institutions that are perceived to treat diverse groups fairly, send a message that those groups are equally respected and valued members of an encompassing and inclusive national group. Perhaps most importantly, perceived procedural fairness increases people's willingness to comply and accept decisions that may be unfavourable to their personal or sub-group interest because the decision is legitimately perceived to be for the wider, collective good<sup>130,131</sup>.

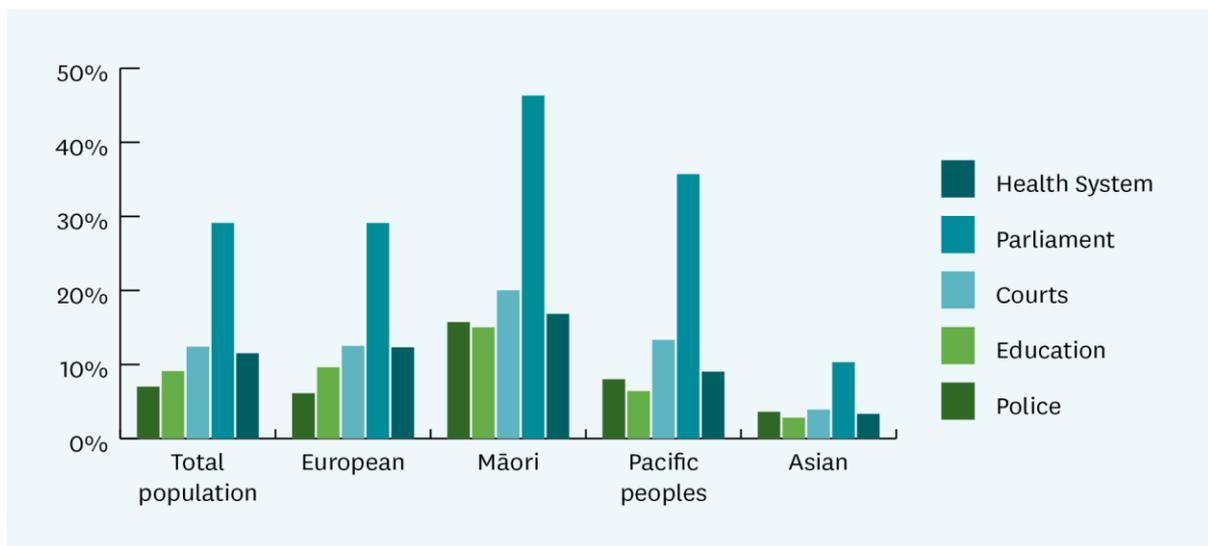
The public policy implications of procedural fairness research are wide ranging. For example, perceived procedural fairness by authorities has been shown to impact on people's voting behaviour and engagement in the democratic process<sup>132</sup>, tax compliance<sup>133</sup>, welfare system compliance<sup>134</sup>, Muslim community members' willingness to report terror threats from within their own community<sup>135,136</sup>, rates of crime reporting generally<sup>137</sup>, people's satisfaction and compliance with police<sup>138</sup>, the effectiveness of specialized court programmes<sup>139</sup>. Procedural unfairness, by contrast, has been shown to be associated with

people’s willingness to justify intergroup violence<sup>140</sup>, violent crowd behaviour<sup>141</sup>, and the escalation of civil unrest<sup>142</sup>. It is worth noting too that perceived institutional injustices are a central theme in the narratives that underpin extremist ideologies and are frequently used as part of propaganda to legitimise violent acts<sup>143</sup>.

## Practical implications for New Zealand

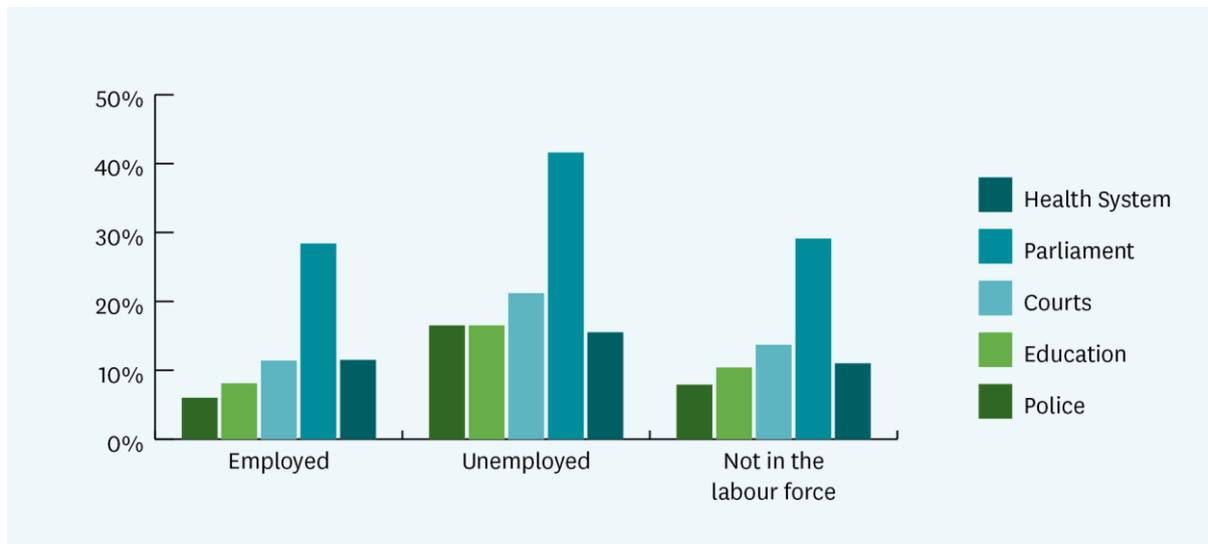
Data from the General Social Survey shows substantial and consistent social disparities in the perceived trustworthiness of various public institutions, as shown in Figure 8 with respect to ethnicity, and Figure 9 with respect to employment status. This highlights the need for institutions to critically reflect on the procedural fairness of their processes, to ensure that all groups have a genuine opportunity to have a say and feel heard, understood and respected.

**Figure 8: Percentage of New Zealanders with low institutional trust, by ethnicity and institution**



Source: General Social Survey, 2016

**Figure 9: Percentage of New Zealanders with low institutional trust, by employment status**



Source: General Social Survey, 2016

## 6.Reducing inequality and improving opportunities for people by providing support and resources

- There is international evidence that poverty and income inequality are both associated with worse social inclusion outcomes. People's perceptions of relative deprivation can also lead to more negative intergroup attitudes.
- Despite widespread perceptions of increasing poverty and inequality, there is little objective evidence of this in recent years within New Zealand.
- However, there is evidence of substantial income disparities and reduced social mobility for selected social and demographic groups.
- There are opportunities to address these disparities, including by providing more equitable access to employment, through the tax-transfer system, anti-discrimination legislation, and employment programs.

### **Poverty and income inequality are linked to worse social inclusion outcomes**

Long-term progress towards building social inclusion will require that all people have adequate material resources to participate fully in society. There is overwhelming evidence that poverty impacts on a wide range of outcomes related to social inclusion including generalised trust<sup>118,144</sup>, the ability to make social connections that can assist with finding work, as well as civic behaviours like volunteering and voting<sup>145</sup>.

As well as addressing income adequacy, addressing wealth inequality and income inequality is important too. Quite separate from the issue of whether people have access to basic material resources, the bigger the gap between the "haves" and the "have nots", the harder it is for individuals to form cross-cutting social relationships. Consistent with this, income inequality has been linked to reduced social cohesion and trust<sup>146,147</sup>, lower educational performance and employment<sup>148,149</sup>, and reduced social, cultural and civic participation<sup>146</sup>. Income inequality and wealth inequality also tends to reduce social mobility and perpetuate socio-demographic disparities over time<sup>150</sup>.

## Perceived relative deprivation can inflame tensions between groups

A significant body of research also demonstrates that it is not just objective indicators of deprivation and inequality that matter, it is the extent to which people *perceive* themselves (or their group) to be worse off relative to other groups. Perceived relative deprivation has been shown to lead to feelings of anger and resentment which, under certain circumstances, can lead to perceiving other groups as a threat, more negative attitudes towards certain outgroups, reduced support for affirmative action and immigration<sup>151</sup>, and people's susceptibility to terrorist recruitment<sup>143</sup>.

One of the implications of this body of research is that well-intentioned efforts to promote cross-group social interaction (e.g. within schools or "pepper-potting" social housing) can backfire if these interactions heighten perceived relative deprivation<sup>76</sup>. The key to mitigating this risk is to ensure the intervention is perceived as procedurally fair, the scale of the intervention is not too small, and extra support is provided to help families integrate into the larger community<sup>152</sup>.

## Specific implications for New Zealand

There is a widespread public *perception* that poverty and inequality is worsening in New Zealand. For example, there is survey evidence that New Zealanders' perceive the issues of poverty, the gap between rich and poor, and the imbalance in wealth in New Zealand to be of increasing concern<sup>153</sup>.

At a national level the measured levels of poverty, inequality and mobility generally paint quite a different picture<sup>154</sup>:

- There is no evidence of any rising trend in income poverty in recent years for the population as a whole.
- The trend in household income inequality (before housing costs) in New Zealand has been relatively stable over the past two decades. Compared to the most recent OECD figures, New Zealand's Gini score of 33 is a little higher than the OECD median of 31.
- After deducting housing costs (AHC), household incomes are more unequal than before housing cost incomes. AHC inequality was somewhat higher from the period 2011 to 2016 compared to the mid-2000s.
- There is a mix of income mobility and immobility, with overall levels similar to those observed in the UK and Australia<sup>155</sup>. For example, out of those who start in one of the lower three household income deciles in the first year, half are still there after seven years, a quarter have moved up to around the middle, and another quarter have moved to have incomes above the middle.

There are, however, marked income and wealth disparities between different social and ethnic groups. For example, workless households, where low-income rates rose steadily over the last 20-30 years (though the trend appears to have plateaued in the last 5-6 years). Further, the median income of European New Zealanders (\$30,900 per annum) is approximately 50 per cent higher than for Māori (\$22,500), Asian (\$20,100), MELAA (\$19,800), and Pacific peoples (\$19,700)<sup>156</sup>. Similarly, there is evidence that rates of income mobility are much lower for some groups (notably Māori and single parents)<sup>157</sup>. There is also some evidence suggesting racist lending practices limit some groups' access to credit<sup>158</sup>.

Providing people with the skills, knowledge and opportunities they need to participate economically (on the supply side) as well as addressing structural discrimination and inequitable hiring practices (on the demand side) is essential for redressing these inequitable outcomes.

There may also be scope to continue to make changes to the tax-transfer system to help redress these inequities. The extent to which the tax and transfer system reduces market income inequality has steadily declined for New Zealand from 27 per cent to 17 per cent over the last three decades, 1985 to 2015 (using the Gini index), and is relatively low compared to other OECD nations<sup>154</sup>.

# What do we need to understand better?

The six key ways reviewed here can provide a useful initial guide for assessing and prioritising policy action.

The table at Appendix 1 provides a high-level overview, including some of the intermediate and overall outcomes that could be achieved. At the same time there are also some knowledge gaps that need to be recognised, specifically:

- **What are the implications under Te Tiriti?** This review has briefly highlighted the opportunities for forging a distinctive, New Zealand policy approach to building social inclusion. However, much more work is needed to fully embed and embrace this approach, including building a much greater awareness and understanding of Te Tiriti and its implications for all New Zealanders.
- **What works on the ground?** Much of the evidence reviewed here points to what matters, but there is comparatively less information evaluating what specific interventions might work to build social inclusion in the New Zealand context. More mixed method evaluations, from diverse cultural and disciplinary perspectives, would help redress this gap.
- **Who are the groups that are routinely neglected?** Data limitations mean that much of the evidence reviewed here focuses on social exclusion experienced by just a few, selected social groups. However, we have a comparatively limited understanding of the process of inclusion and exclusion for many other groups – for example, LGBTIQ communities, disabled people, age discrimination and discrimination based on perceived social class.
- **Why do some people hold extreme, especially violent, counter-normative views?** Gaining a deeper understanding of the perspectives of people who hold extreme counter-normative views is important for effectively preventing and limiting their impact.
- **How can digital tools support social inclusion outcomes?** There is an urgent need for good evidence on how digital learning tools (e.g. games supported by teachers) might provide an engaging way for children to learn about combatting racism and discrimination. At the same time, we need to better understand how to undermine and limit the use of digital technologies for propagating various forms of discrimination, prejudice and hate.

- **How do we turn vicious cycles into virtuous ones?** A further gap in our current understanding of social inclusion in New Zealand is how the six key ways interact and mutually reinforce each other, for better or worse. The evidence reviewed so far suggests, for example, that income poverty, housing affordability, institutional racism, spatial segregation, and limited opportunities for social contact are likely to create a vicious cycle, with all of the hallmarks of a “wicked policy problem”<sup>159</sup>.

## **Some concluding remarks**

The evidence outlined in this rapid evidence review highlights the challenges but also the promise of systematically addressing social inclusion. While the complexities and uncertainties of working towards a more inclusive New Zealand are real, this should not overshadow the opportunities to make a lasting, positive difference. With this in mind, maintaining momentum for change will be of overarching importance. In the short to medium term, behaviours, attitudes, and systems are likely to be relatively slow to change. But this can obscure some of the more substantive and enduring positive changes that are only observable over the long term.

# Appendix 1: Overview of the 6 Key Ways Framework.

Key ways to influence social inclusion	Intermediate Outcomes	Overall outcomes
<p><b>Fostering common values and inclusive social norms</b></p>	<p>New Zealanders positively value diverse groups' identity and heritage and uphold shared, civic norms.</p>	<p>New Zealand is stronger when everybody can reach their potential.</p>
<p><b>Encouraging and facilitating positive interactions between people</b></p>	<p>Organisations and institutions reflect New Zealand's diversity and people feel more positive towards diverse social groups because they have opportunities to meaningfully interact within safe and diversity friendly environments.</p>	<p>We can contest ideas and disagree respectfully.</p>
<p><b>Tackling harms to inclusion, including prejudice, discrimination, and other harmful behaviours</b></p>	<p>New Zealanders feel safe in their relationships, families, schools, workplaces, and communities because prejudice and discrimination, at all levels, gets systematically addressed and is denormalised.</p>	<p>As a nation we value indigeneity and embrace New Zealand's growing diversity as a strength.</p>
<p><b>Supporting people to have the knowledge and skills they need to participate</b></p>	<p>New Zealanders understand and appreciate diverse perspectives and are empowered to participate socially and economically because they have access to skills, information and knowledge that meets their needs.</p>	<p>We are a more equitable society.</p>
<p><b>Supporting people to have a voice and feel heard</b></p>	<p>New Zealanders feel confident to be able to share their views and raise concerns constructively because they know they will be respected and listened to.</p>	<p>People's wellbeing improves.</p>
<p><b>Reducing inequality and improving opportunities for people by providing support and resources</b></p>	<p>New Zealanders can get the material supports and employment opportunities they need to participate.</p>	<p>A more peaceful and happier society.</p>

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